

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention relates to compositions and methods for eliciting a neutralizing antibody response specific to HIV Tat proteins. Also disclosed are vaccines including amino terminus Tat 5 linear epitope peptide fragments having the amino terminus sequence of the HIV Tat protein, optionally conjugated to a carrier protein. The invention relates as well to the nucleotide sequences encoding the peptide fragments, recombinant vectors carrying the sequences, recombinant host cells including either the sequences or vectors, and recombinant peptides. The invention further includes methods for using the isolated, recombinant peptides in vaccines, 10 assays, and for use in therapeutic applications.